The LAST SPEECH, CONFESSION, and DYING WORDS of

GRIFFITH WILLIAMS,

Who was executed at the West End of the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, on Wednesday the 12th of March, 1800, and his Body given to be publickly dissected, as the horrid Murder of Ann Wilson, alias Bruce.

I GRIFFITH WILLIAMS, aged 24 years, born in the Isle of Carnarvon in Wales, of honest and reputable parents, who gave me such education as their circumstances would admit, which being but strained, I at a very early period of life went to sea, and has continued in the seafaring line almost ever since, and was always well beloved both by my messmates and companions; but being flushed with youth, health and strength, I committed many foolish and extravagant errors, though often without any evil intention, but what proceeded from the above and intoxication, which is often the ruin of too many of them that follow my line of life, but I hope my untimely end will be a warning to all other sea-faring men, to avoid the rock upon which I have been wrecked.

As I said before, I at a very early period of life went to sea, but as I do not wish to hurt the feelings of my dear parents or relations by making my misfortune known to them, shall confine myself to giving an account of the voyages I have been engaged in without mentioning any names, as it can be of no use to the public, and far less to me, who has to answer to God for all my misdeeds, and from whom I hope for pardon through the merits of Jesus Christ my Redeemer and Saviour.—I bound myself an apprentice to the Union of Liverpool about 10 years ago or rather better, in which ship I served for near three years; but the war commencing I left the Union, and entered on board a privateer, called the Lovely Lass, and sailed for the coast of Cuba and New Providence, in which I remained for some months, and made several captures, but having got some clearance, I left the privateer and entered on board the Mercury of Boston, bound to Charlestown, South Carolina, and having left her, I wrought some weeks on board an English vessel lying in that port, and then entered myself on board the Minerva, belonging to Pampleborough, state of Massachusets, in which I made a voyage from Charlestown to Amsterdam, and returned in the same ship to Pampleborough, and being cleared off at that port I made several coasting voyages in that part of the world, I afterwards entered on board the Polly of Pettyford, which is likewise in the state of Massachusets, and made a voyage to the island of Barbadoes, from thence to Martinico, Dominique and St Kitts, and returned in the same vessel to Savannah in Georgia, I then left the above vessel and went on board the Polly of Philadelphia, then lying at Savannah bound to Martinico, from thence to Dominica, and returned to Charlestown, South Carolina, and being paid off I entered on board the Susannah of that place, which was then bound for Embden, and having disposed of our cargo at Embden, took in a cargo for London; but by stress of weather were forced to steer for the Frith of Forth (and to my great grief, has never been able to leave it) and having the preceding Saturday before the fatal catastrophe for which I now suffer, received 5*l.* 5*s* Sterling, I came on shore, and behaved in a very foolish and extravagant manner, in drinking and frequenting bad company, which, alas, are too often to be met with in sea-port towns and having been formerly in the house of Ann Wilson, the deceased, I was by that means a little acquainted with her, and the Sunday evening being a good deal heated with liquor, I unfortunately met with her, who asked me for a dram, and going along with her to her own house, and some of her acquaintance coming in, we had several drams altogether. It being then grown late, I staid in her house all night, and missing my money in the morning, I charged the girl who slept with me with having taken it, which she denied; notwithstanding which I gave her a good many blows which made her leave the house. I then threatened the deceased, that if she did not restore my money I would give her as much, and so left the house. The next day, I and some of my comrades called at the house when Wilson declared she had not my money nor knew nothing of it. We then went into a neighbouring house and got some drink, and Mathie came in making a heavy complaint that I had hurt her very much, but at the same time told me Wilson had my money: I told Mathie I was sorry for what I had done, and that I believed she had not taken my money. Mathie then went with me to her house, when I accused her of having my money, which she denied, I then left her telling her that I would call in the evening for it, which I, unfortunately, both for myself and her, did. Finding that she still denied, I gave her several blows to see if it would make her confess, but to no purpose, and I being in a rage and heat of drink had no thought of what I was doing.

I now earnestly hope that my untimely and ignominious death may be a warning to all young people to refrain from the company of lewd women, which have been the cause of my overthrow; for though they may escape the snare in which I have been caught, yet when they come to appear before an all-seeing God, they will have to repent in sackcloth and ashes, and cry mightily to that God who is able to deliver me from blood guiltiness, which I hope he will through the merits of my all-sufficient Redeemer.

I return my sincere thanks to the reverend clergy who have taken so much care for my precious soul, especially Dr Inglis, Mr Haldane and others, may God make them a recompence, I also am much indebted to John Guilland the inner-turnkey for his great attention and humanity towards me, may the Lord reward him.

I die in peace with all men, hoping all those that I have injured will forgive me, as I hope to be forgiven at the throne of Grace, by the merits of my blessed Saviour into whose hands I recommend my spirit.

GRIFFITH WILLIAMS.

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WILLIAMS, Griffith ex. for murder of WILSON, Ann